

September 15, 2014

The Honorable Raj Shah
Administrator
United States Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20523

Dear Administrator Shah:

The 2014 Ebola outbreak is one of the largest and most devastatingly ever, and the first in West Africa. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 4,400 people, including four Americans, have contracted the Ebola virus since March 2014 and nearly 2,300 have died. Left untreated, public health experts estimate the virus could spread to nearly 250,000 individuals by November of 2014.

As the lead agency coordinating the U.S. response to this crisis in Africa, it is imperative that you are able to leverage all necessary capabilities and programs within the federal government, while concurrently managing and accounting for resources from throughout the federal government.

Additionally, a public health emergency of this severity requires the attention of the international community as a whole. As you know, the outbreak has overwhelmed the containment and treatment measures of the governments in the affected area. In her September 14, 2014 letter to President Obama, Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf highlights the urgent need for resources from the United States and its international contemporaries. While it is obvious that the United States must serve a leadership role in the response to the outbreak, we must remain steadfast in encouraging our partners across the world to commit resources and capabilities to this situation.

The exponential increase in Ebola infections and deaths further accelerates the necessity to ensure all programs related to addressing this crisis are properly managed, resourced, and synchronized within each agency and across the federal government.

To help better understand the steps your agency is taking to address this crisis, please provide a detailed listing of the total resources that have been utilized by USAID as part of the crisis response in Africa, as well as the source of these funds and capabilities. Additionally, please provide a detailed listing of the resources committed by international partners, as well as what funding has already been obligated.

I encourage you as the leader of America's foreign assistance agency to find opportunities for increased collaboration and coordination from the international community in order to address this situation efficiently and effectively. It is imperative that we get ahead of this growing crisis and we must leverage all available assistance to do so.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We would appreciate your response as soon as possible. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Sarah Johnson of my staff at (202)-224-3353.